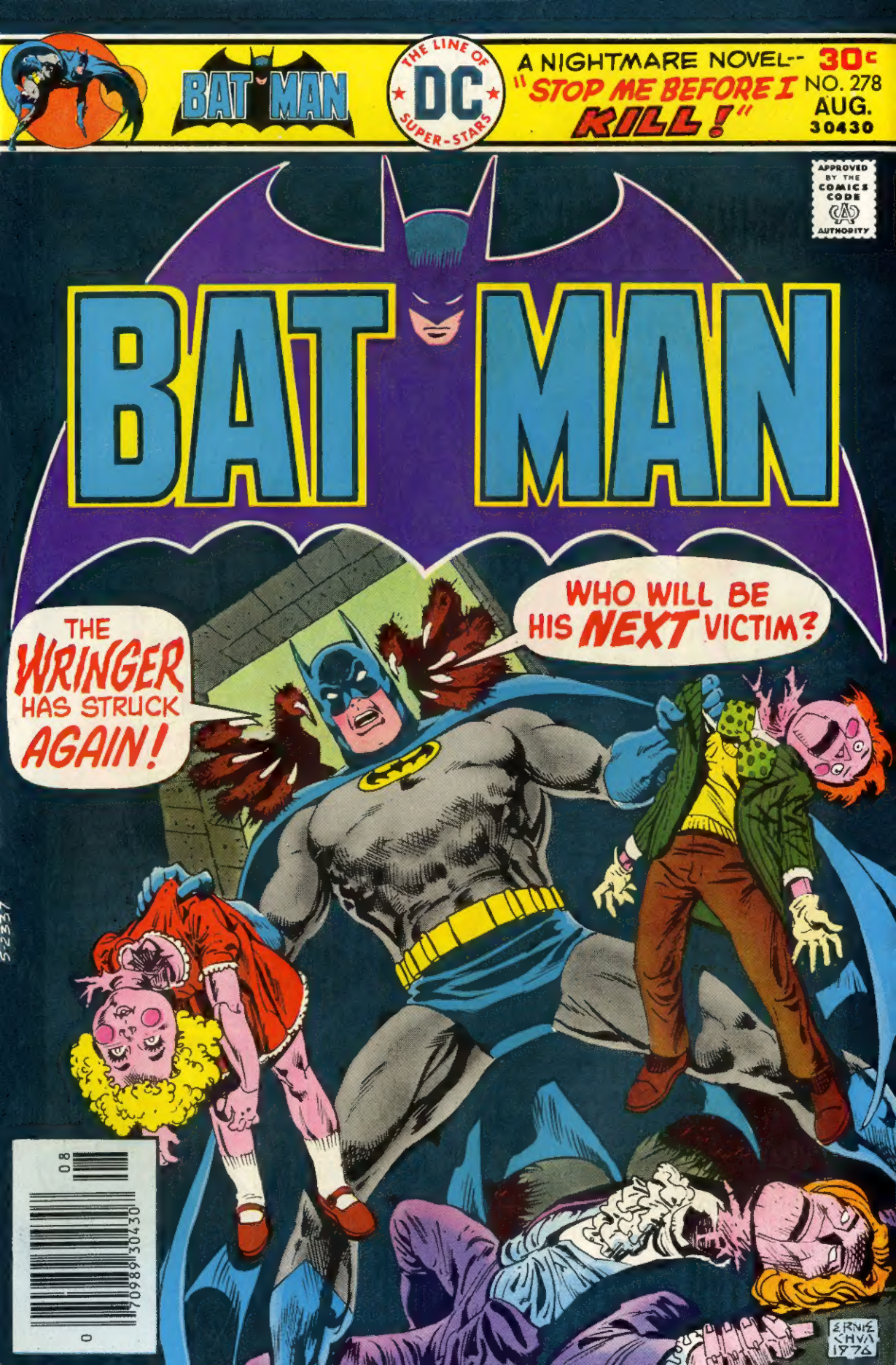
BAT MAN
THE LINE OF DC SUPER-STARS
A NIGHTMARE NOVEL-- "STOP ME BEFORE I KILL!"
30¢
NO. 278
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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BAT MAN
THE WRINGER HAS STRUCK AGAIN!
WHO WILL BE HIS NEXT VICTIM?
ERNIE CHUA 1976

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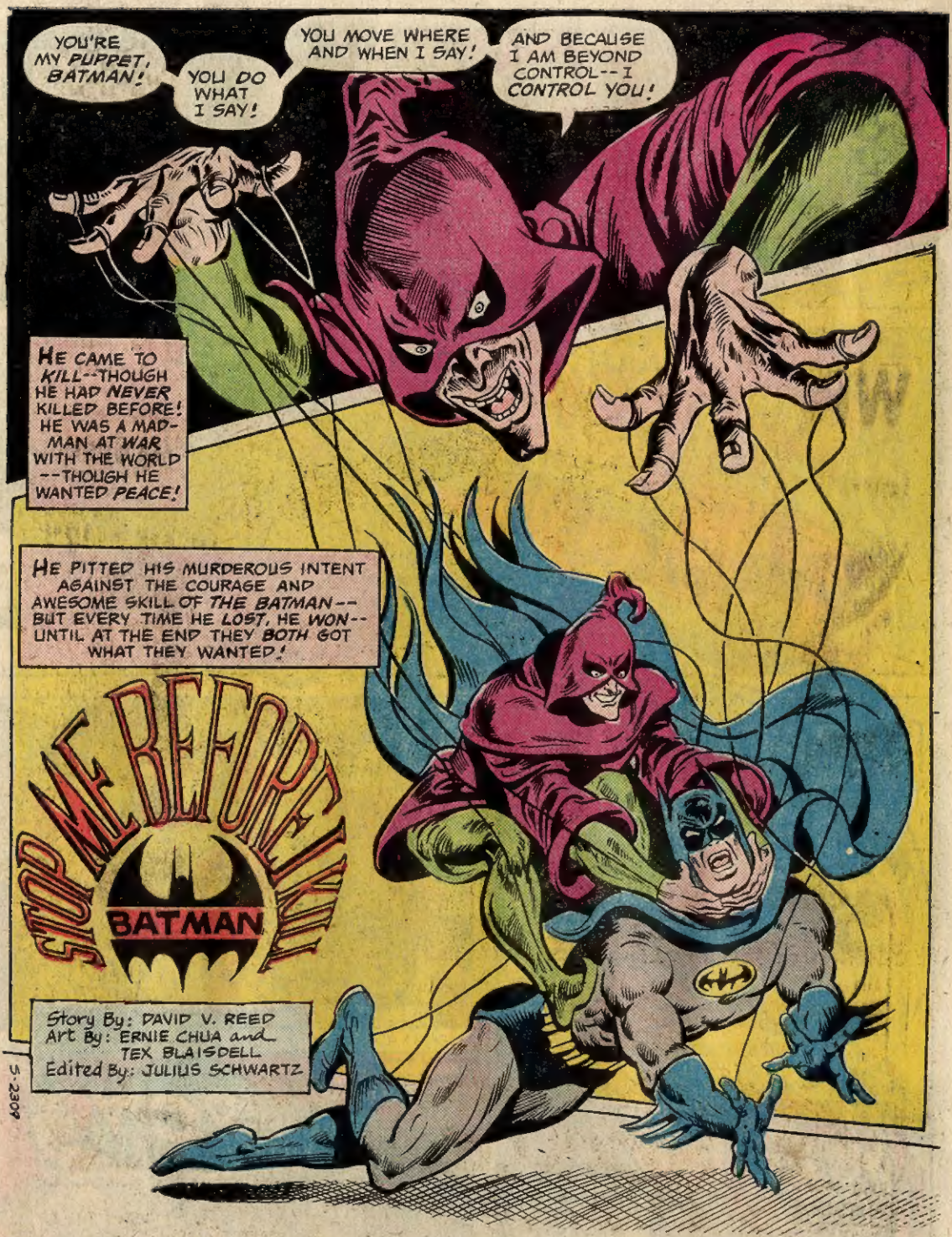
YOU'RE MY PUPPET, BATMAN!
YOU DO WHAT I SAY!
YOU MOVE WHERE AND WHEN I SAY!
AND BECAUSE I AM BEYOND CONTROL--I CONTROL YOU!
HE CAME TO KILL--THOUGH HE HAD NEVER KILLED BEFORE! HE WAS A MAD-MAN AT WAR WITH THE WORLD --THOUGH HE WANTED PEACE!
HE PITTED HIS MURDEROUS INTENT AGAINST THE COURAGE AND AWESOME SKILL OF THE BATMAN-- BUT EVERY TIME HE LOST, HE WON-- UNTIL AT THE END THEY BOTH GOT WHAT THEY WANTED!
STOP ME BEFORE I KILL!
BATMAN
Story By: DAVID V. REED
Art By: ERNIE CHUA and TEX BLAISDELL
Edited By: JULIUS SCHWARTZ
5-2309

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FAMILIAR SCENARIO FOR A NIGHT IN THE CAREER OF THE BATMAN--
BLAM BLAM
--OR IS IT?
THE END OF A HIJACK... SO FAR, A PIECE OF CAKE!
GEK
UNTIL--
DISC ELECTRIC
GRAAASH!
THE HIJACKERS LAM OUT AND SEPARATE--
THE BATMAN! RUN FOR IT!
THE CAPED CRUSADER TAKES OFF AFTER ONE...
...WHILE HIS PASSENGER-- WHAT'S THAT?-- HIS PASSENGER?!?
DISCO ELECTRIC
RIGHT!--HIS PASSENGER-- WHO VERY DEFINITELY IS NOT ROBIN-- GOES FOR THE OTHER!
RESULT NUMBER ONE--
POW
UUNNNFF!

RESULT NUMBER TWO--
THIS, MY LAD, IS A GENUINE-- IMPORTED-- HIGHLAND FLING!
TOTAL ELAPSED TIME: 2 MINUTES, 24 SECONDS!...
NICE GOING, INSPECTOR! ENJOYING YOURSELF?
QUITE! NOT THAT IT'S WHAT I USUALLY DO BACK IN LONDON, BUT A BIT OF EXERCISE IS ALWAYS BRACING!
MEANWHILE, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS--
COMMISSIONER, ISN'T THERE ANYTHING HOT TONIGHT,,,ASIDE FROM THIS DUMB MARIONETTE THING?
NO WORD FROM THE BATMAN AND THAT VISITING INSPECTOR KITTRIDGE FROM NEW SCOTLAND YARD WHO'S WITH HIM?
BEEP BEEP-BEEP
HOLD IT!--THAT'S THE BATMAN NOW!
GOOD! GOOD!-- SEE YOU SOON!
BOYS, HERE'S YOUR STORY! THE BATMAN AND INSPECTOR KITTRIDGE BROKE UP A HIJACK--
--AND THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY HERE!
A HIJACK? WELL...BETTER THAN NOTHING!
OUTSIDE HQ--A FEW MINUTES LATER...
BOOK 'EM, MIKE! ARMED ROBBERY, ATTEMPTED MURDER--THE WORKS!
JUST THEN-- FROM OUT OF THE SHADOWS--
YES, WHAT IS IT?
UHH...BBB-- UHH...GGGUH... BBB...

SPEAK UP, MAN -- WHAT DO YOU WANT? -- MY AUTOGRAPH?
BBBB... HHU... GGGHH...
AND SUDDENLY THE MAN TURNS AND RUNS OFF!..
WHAT D'YOU SUPPOSE THAT WAS ALL ABOUT?
WHO KNOWS? POOR DEVIL -- OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING AND JUST COULDN'T GET IT OUT!
LET'S GO -- THE COMMISSIONER'S WAITING!
SORRY, FELLERS -- JUST A WORKOUT! YOU CAN GET THE DETAILS DOWNSTAIRS...
WELL, INSPECTOR, HOW DID YOU LIKE YOUR FIRST NIGHT ON BATMAN PATROL?
VERY NICE INDEED, THOUGH AS THE BATMAN SAYS, FAIRLY ROUTINE!
I WAS RATHER HOPING FOR SOMETHING MORE...
SOMETHING MORE?
YES, COMMISSIONER -- I THOUGHT WE MIGHT RUN ACROSS ONE OF THE MORE COMPLEX CRIMES THE BATMAN IS FAMOUS FOR SOLVING --
--Y'KNOW, SOMETHING BAFFLING... BIZARRE!
BIZARRE EH? IT'S JUST POSSIBLE I MAY HAVE SOMETHING HERE FOR YOU --
SOME MANIAC IN A WEIRD GETUP LEAPED ON STAGE AT THE WELLES' THEATRE EARLIER TONIGHT -- GRABBED THIS MARIONETTE -- WRUNG ITS NECK AND ESCAPED!
FASCINATING... IN A SMALL WAY... BUT REALLY TOO BONKERS TO MEAN ANYTHING MUCH...
...WOULDN'T YOU SAY, BATMAN?
HMM... ACTIONS LIKE THESE ARE SOMETIMES MEANT TO GET MY ATTENTION... BUT IT COULD BE A ONE-TIME THING!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

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You've tangled with the Hungries before. They sneak up behind you at the library, and make your stomach growl until your face turns red. They strike when you're halfway home from school, at least ten minutes from the nearest sandwich.

If you want to be ready, next time the Hungries come around, try taking along your pocket-size secret weapon.

Slim Jim.® The mighty meat snack you can carry anywhere, and eat anytime. In six Hungries-conquering flavors - mild, spicy, pizza, bacon, salami, and pepperoni.

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If you don't, and the Hungries get you, don't say we didn't warn you.

A little less than a meal.
A little more than a snack.

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HEY KIDS! BOB KANE, creator of Batman, has written a new song called "Have Faith in Me!" recorded by HANK LEIDS and the "Bat-Group" COURAGE.

WOW

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"You've Got
Me Crying"

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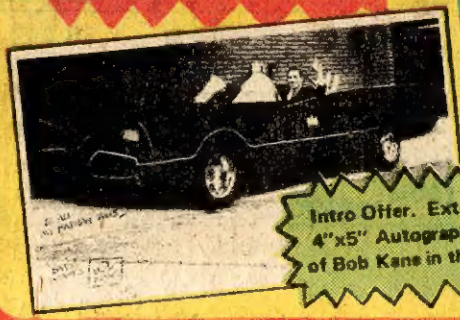

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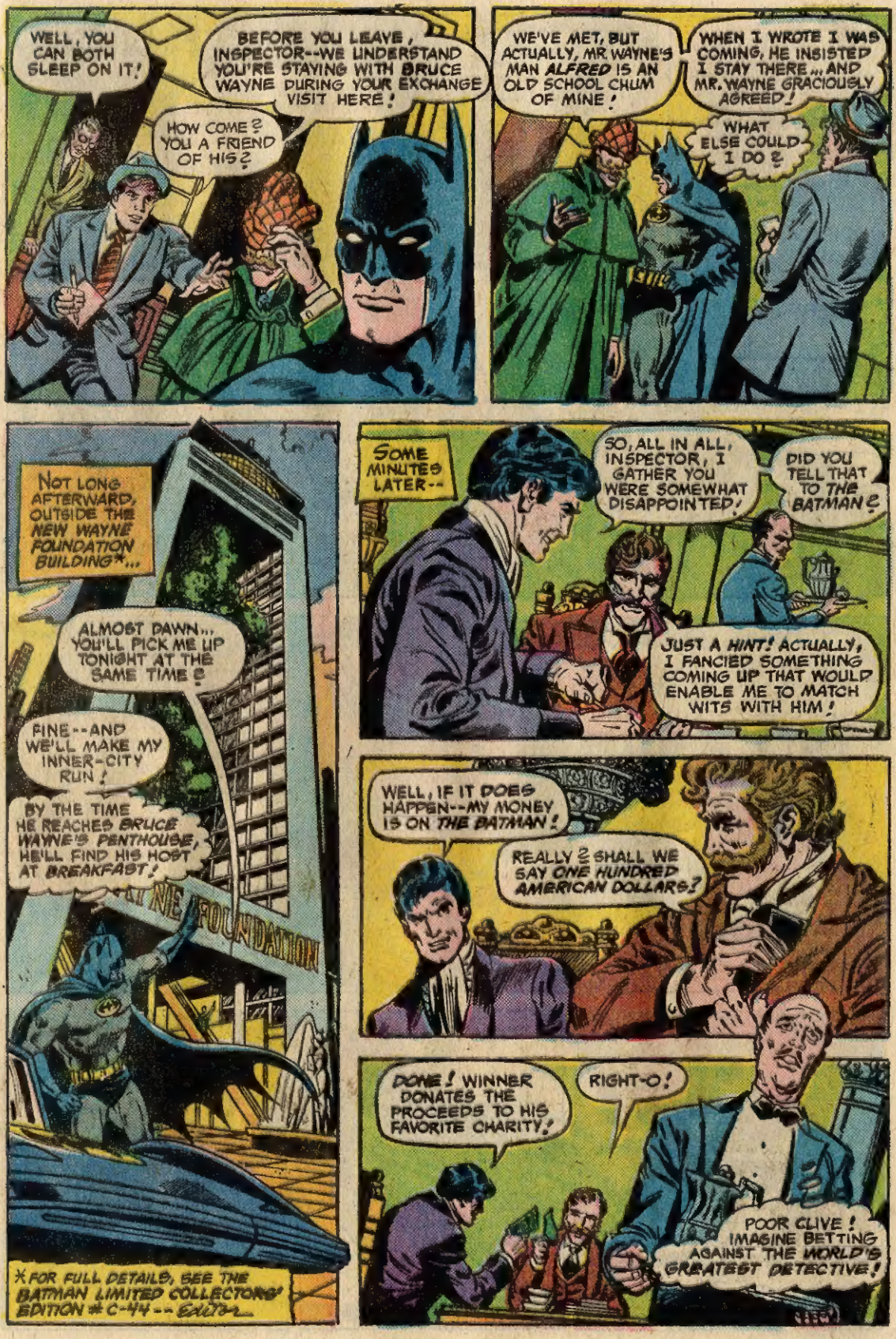
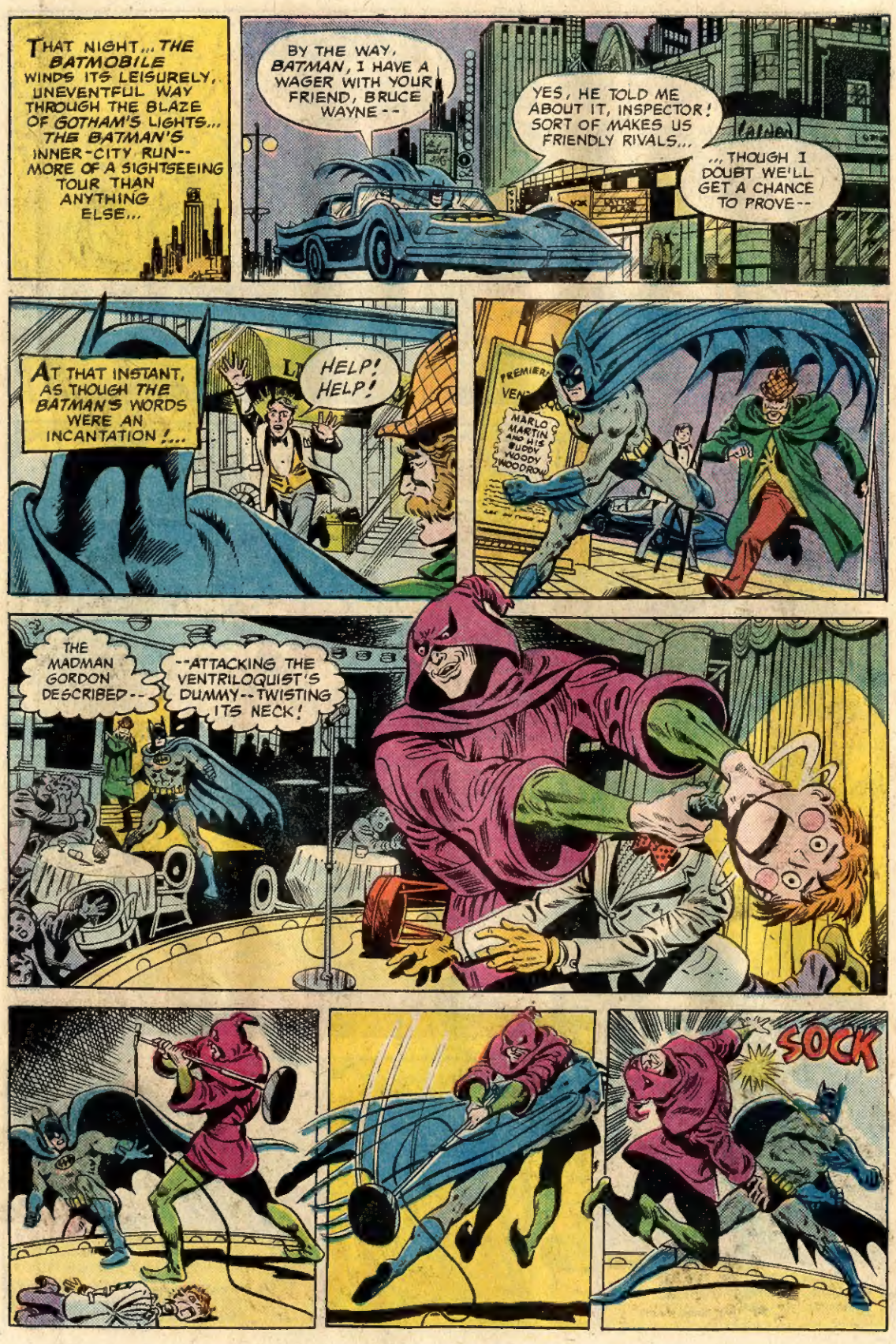
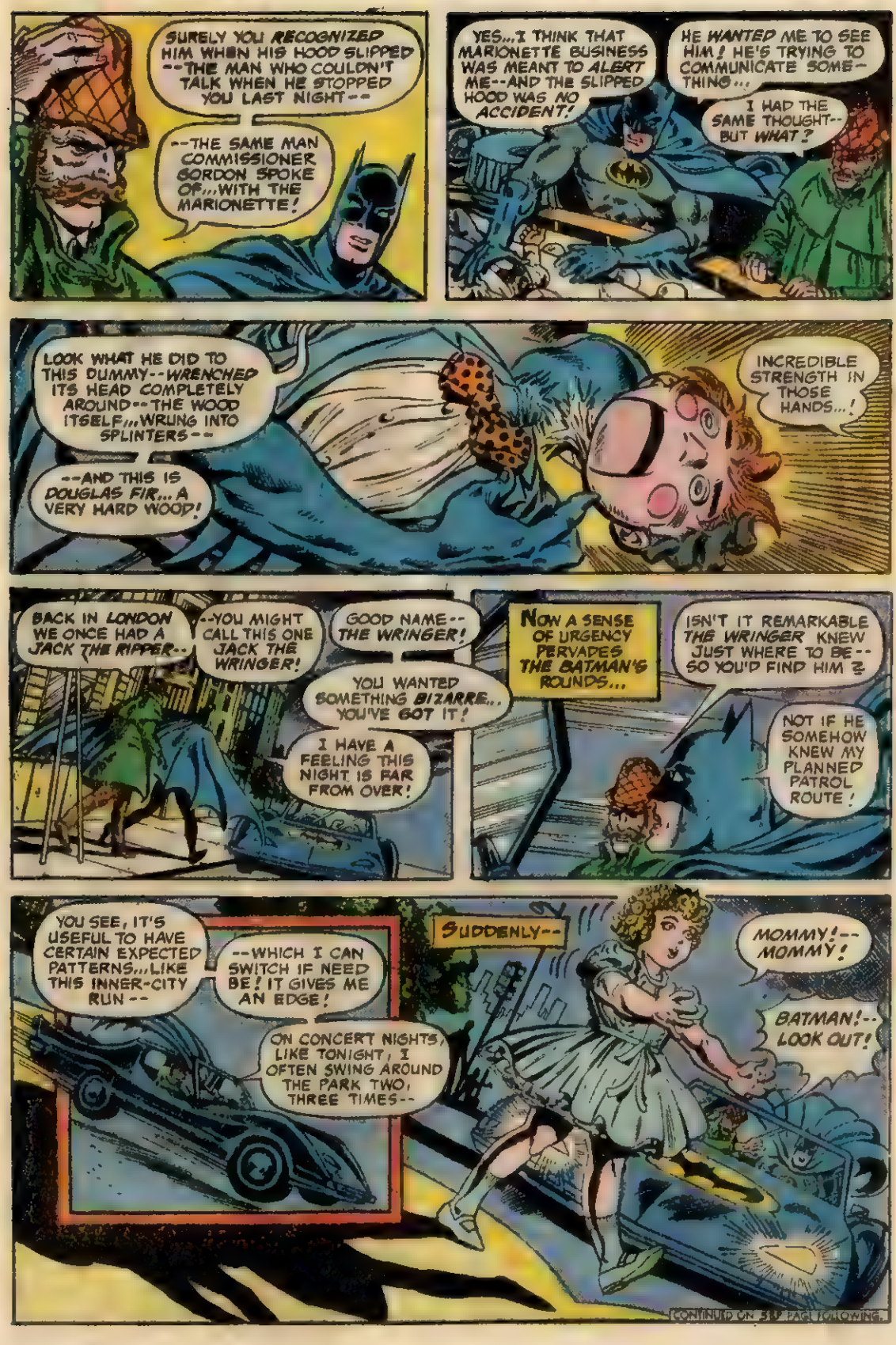

WELL, YOU CAN BOTH SLEEP ON IT!
BEFORE YOU LEAVE, INSPECTOR--WE UNDERSTAND YOU'RE STAYING WITH BRUCE WAYNE DURING YOUR EXCHANGE VISIT HERE!
HOW COME? YOU A FRIEND OF HIS?
WE'VE MET, BUT ACTUALLY, MR. WAYNE'S MAN ALFRED IS AN OLD SCHOOL CHUM OF MINE!
WHEN I WROTE I WAS COMING, HE INSISTED I STAY THERE... AND MR. WAYNE GRACIOUSLY AGREED!
WHAT ELSE COULD I DO?
NOT LONG AFTERWARD, OUTSIDE THE NEW WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING*...
ALMOST DAWN... YOU'LL PICK ME UP TONIGHT AT THE SAME TIME?
FINE--AND WE'LL MAKE MY INNER-CITY RUN!
BY THE TIME HE REACHES BRUCE WAYNE'S PENTHOUSE, HE'LL FIND HIS HOST AT BREAKFAST!
NE FOUNDATION
*FOR FULL DETAILS, SEE THE BATMAN LIMITED COLLECTORS' EDITION #C-44 -- Editor
SOME MINUTES LATER--
SO, ALL IN ALL, INSPECTOR, I GATHER YOU WERE SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED!
DID YOU TELL THAT TO THE BATMAN?
JUST A HINT! ACTUALLY, I FANCIED SOMETHING COMING UP THAT WOULD ENABLE ME TO MATCH WITS WITH HIM!
WELL, IF IT DOES HAPPEN--MY MONEY IS ON THE BATMAN!
REALLY? SHALL WE SAY ONE HUNDRED AMERICAN DOLLARS?
DONE! WINNER DONATES THE PROCEEDS TO HIS FAVORITE CHARITY!
RIGHT-O!
POOR CLIVE! IMAGINE BETTING AGAINST THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE!


THAT NIGHT... THE BATMOBILE WINDS ITS LEISURELY, UNEVENTFUL WAY THROUGH THE BLAZE OF GOTHAM'S LIGHTS... THE BATMAN'S INNER-CITY RUN-- MORE OF A SIGHTSEEING TOUR THAN ANYTHING ELSE...
BY THE WAY, BATMAN, I HAVE A WAGER WITH YOUR FRIEND, BRUCE WAYNE--
YES, HE TOLD ME ABOUT IT, INSPECTOR! SORT OF MAKES US FRIENDLY RIVALS...
...THOUGH I DOUBT WE'LL GET A CHANCE TO PROVE--
AT THAT INSTANT, AS THOUGH THE BATMAN'S WORDS WERE AN INCANTATION!...
HELP! HELP!
MARLO MARTIN AND HIS BUDDY WOODY WOODROW
THE MADMAN GORDON DESCRIBED--
--ATTACKING THE VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY--TWISTING ITS NECK!
SOCK

KRAK
FOR AN INSTANT, THE BATMAN HESITATES--
THEN MAKES HIS DECISION!...
YOU ALL RIGHT, INSPECTOR?
NOT TOO BAD-- BUT WHY'D YOU LET HIM GET AWAY?
I WAS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT YOU!
ALL THAT KOOK ADDS UP TO IS A CASE OF CRIMINAL MISCHIEF!


SURELY YOU RECOGNIZED HIM WHEN HIS HOOD SLIPPED --THE MAN WHO COULDN'T TALK WHEN HE STOPPED YOU LAST NIGHT--
--THE SAME MAN COMMISSIONER GORDON SPOKE OF...WITH THE MARIONETTE!
YES...I THINK THAT MARIONETTE BUSINESS WAS MEANT TO ALERT ME--AND THE SLIPPED HOOD WAS NO ACCIDENT!
HE WANTED ME TO SEE HIM! HE'S TRYING TO COMMUNICATE SOMETHING...
I HAD THE SAME THOUGHT--BUT WHAT?
LOOK WHAT HE DID TO THIS DUMMY--WRENCHED ITS HEAD COMPLETELY AROUND--THE WOOD ITSELF...WRUNG INTO SPLINTERS--
--AND THIS IS DOUGLAS FIR...A VERY HARD WOOD!
INCREDIBLE STRENGTH IN THOSE HANDS...!
BACK IN LONDON WE ONCE HAD A JACK THE RIPPER--
--YOU MIGHT CALL THIS ONE JACK THE WRINGER!
GOOD NAME--THE WRINGER!
YOU WANTED SOMETHING BIZARRE... YOU'VE GOT IT!
I HAVE A FEELING THIS NIGHT IS FAR FROM OVER!
NOW A SENSE OF URGENCY PERVADES THE BATMAN'S ROUNDS...
ISN'T IT REMARKABLE THE WRINGER KNEW JUST WHERE TO BE--SO YOU'D FIND HIM?
NOT IF HE SOMEHOW KNEW MY PLANNED PATROL ROUTE!
YOU SEE, IT'S USEFUL TO HAVE CERTAIN EXPECTED PATTERNS...LIKE THIS INNER-CITY RUN--
--WHICH I CAN SWITCH IF NEED BE! IT GIVES ME AN EDGE!
ON CONCERT NIGHTS, LIKE TONIGHT, I OFTEN SWING AROUND THE PARK TWO, THREE TIMES--
SUDDENLY--
MOMMY!--MOMMY!
BATMAN!--LOOK OUT!
CONTINUED ON 5TH PAGE FOLLOWING

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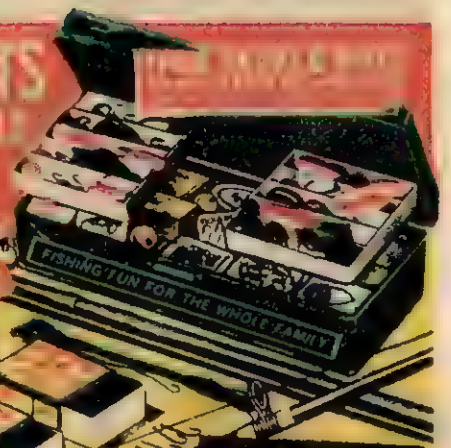

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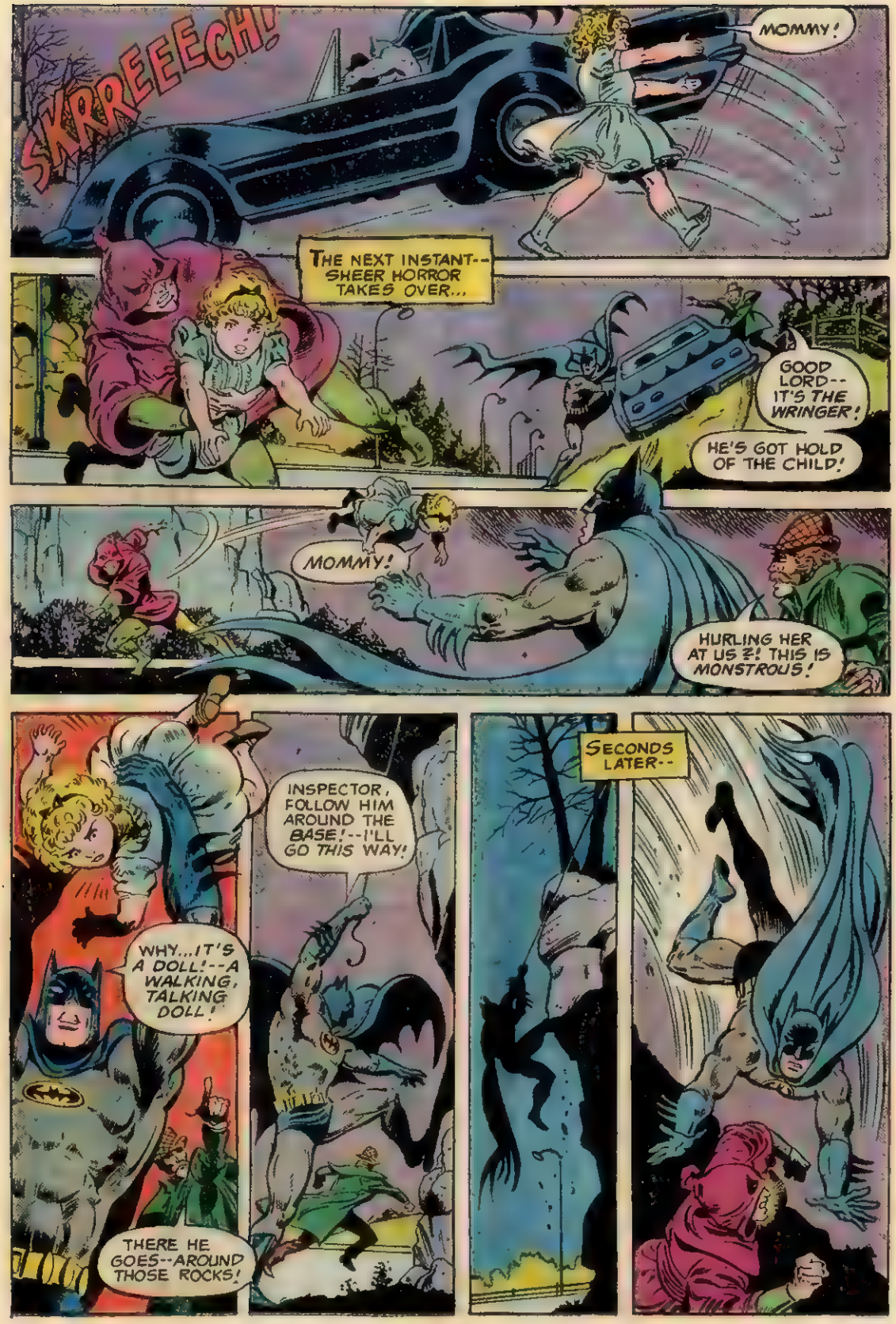
SKRREEECH!
MOMMY!
THE NEXT INSTANT--SHEER HORROR TAKES OVER...
GOOD LORD--IT'S THE WRINGER!
HE'S GOT HOLD OF THE CHILD!
MOMMY!
HURLING HER AT US?! THIS IS MONSTROUS!
INSPECTOR, FOLLOW HIM AROUND THE BASE!--I'LL GO THIS WAY!
WHY...IT'S A DOLL!--A WALKING, TALKING DOLL!
THERE HE GOES--AROUND THOSE ROCKS!
SECONDS LATER--

THIS TIME, WRINGER... TALK!
TRYING TO WRING MY NECK AGAIN...?
KRAK
LOST THE WRINGER!
BATMAN--OVER HERE!
THIS WAY--HURRY!
KITTRIDGE!--FROM THE BOATHOUSE!
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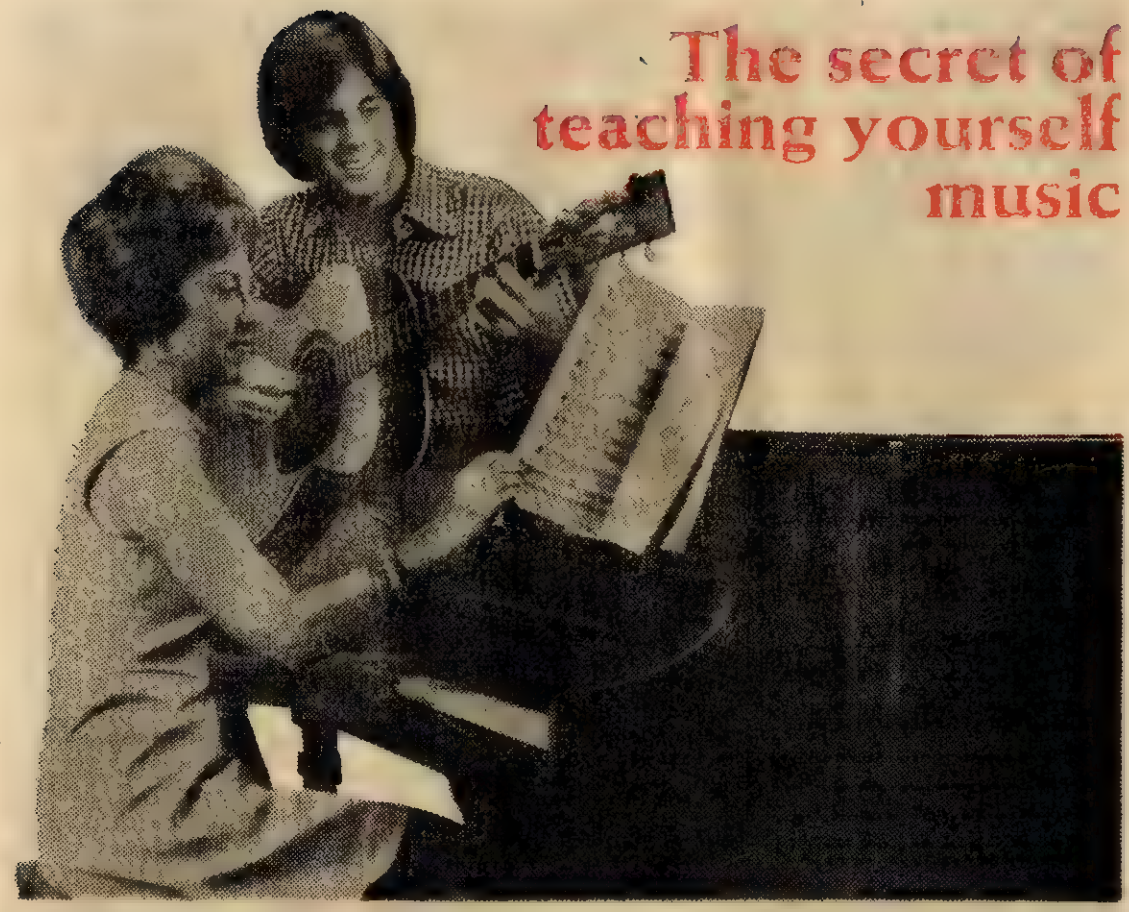
The secret of teaching yourself music



It's just organized common sense, says this 75-year-old home-study school. Their step-by-step word-and-picture instructions take the mystery out of learning to play the piano, the guitar, or the spinet organ.

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Another recent graduate, Cecelia Feeney of Vineland, N.J. reports: "It's like a dream come true. Knowing how to play the piano and read music has given me new self-confidence."

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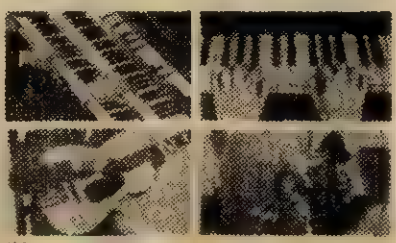

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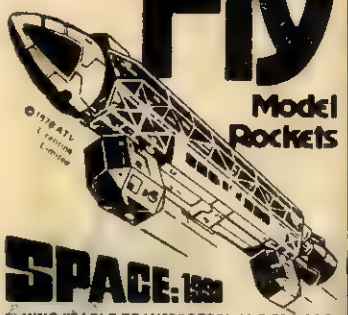

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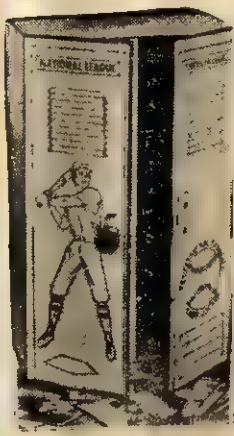

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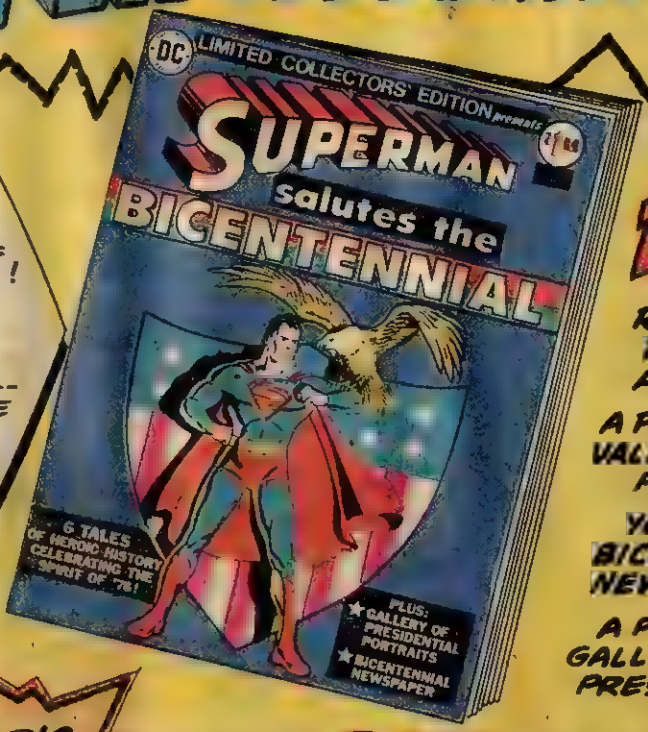
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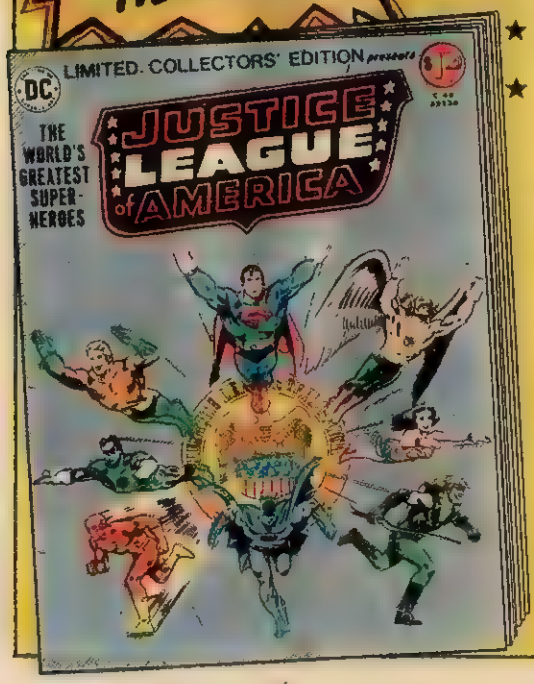

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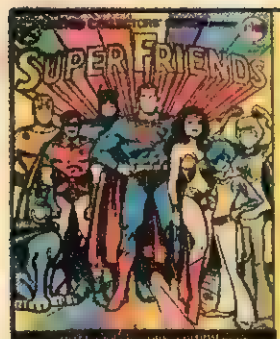

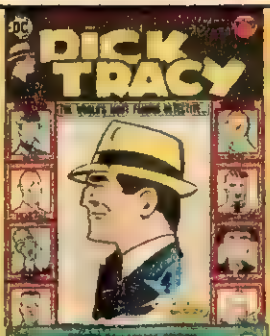

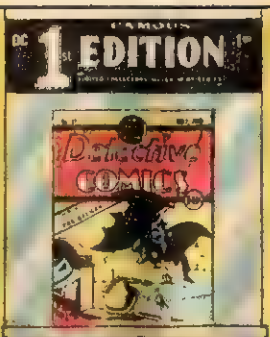

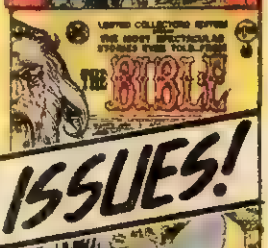

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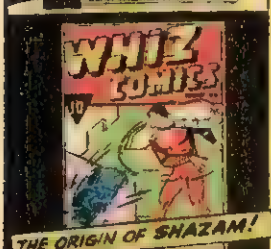

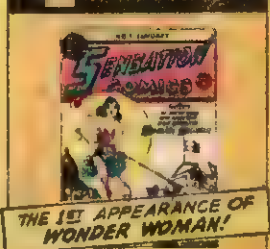

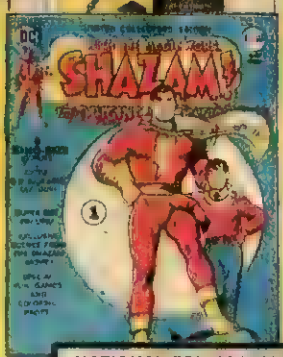

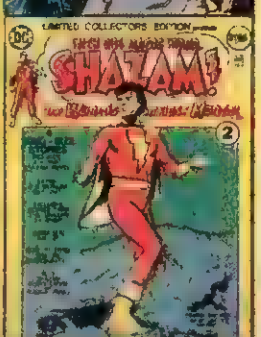

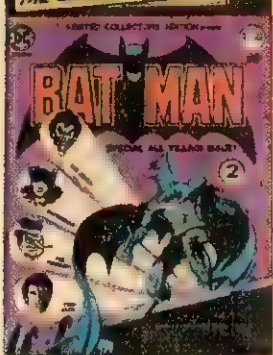

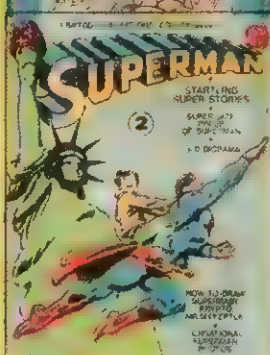

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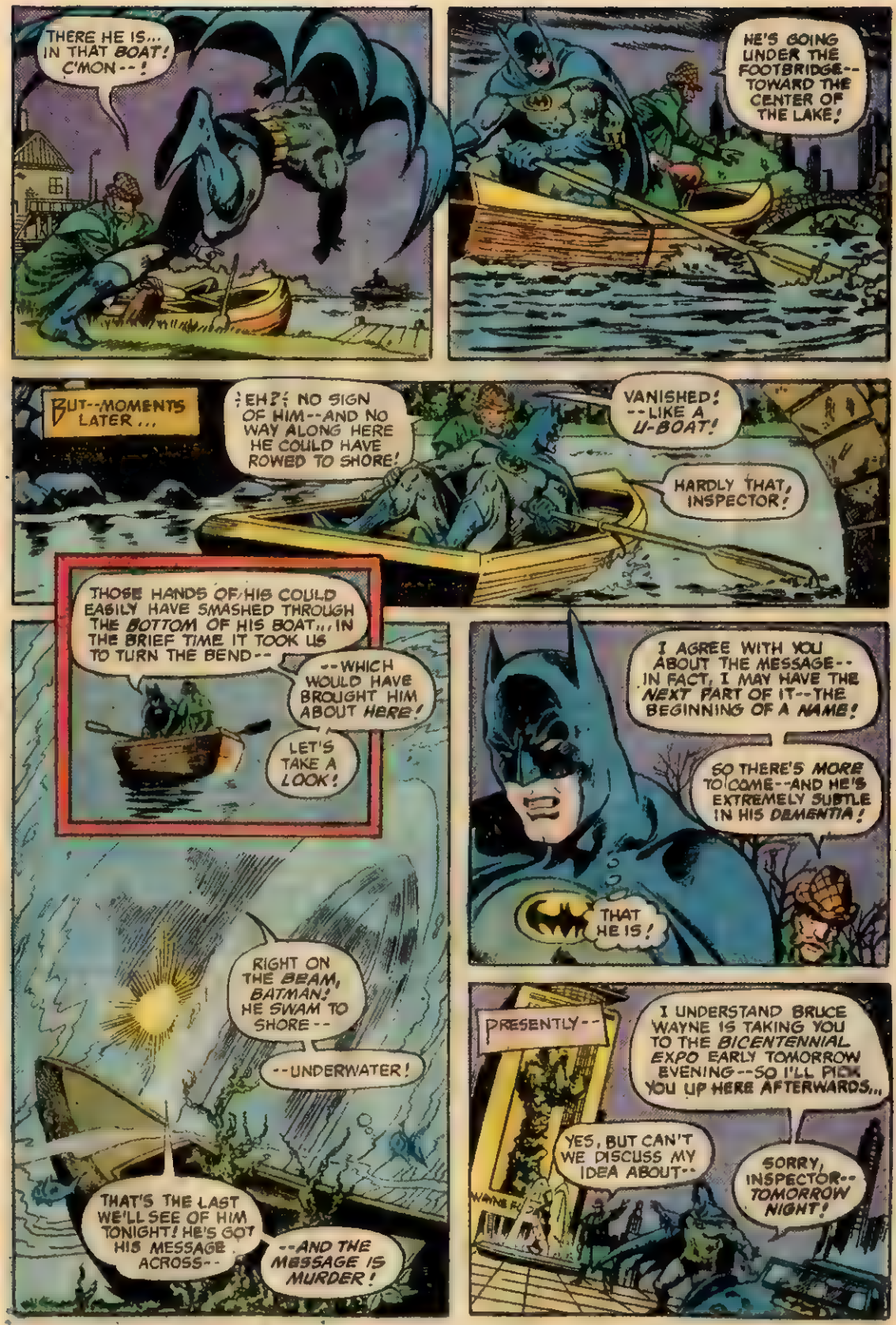
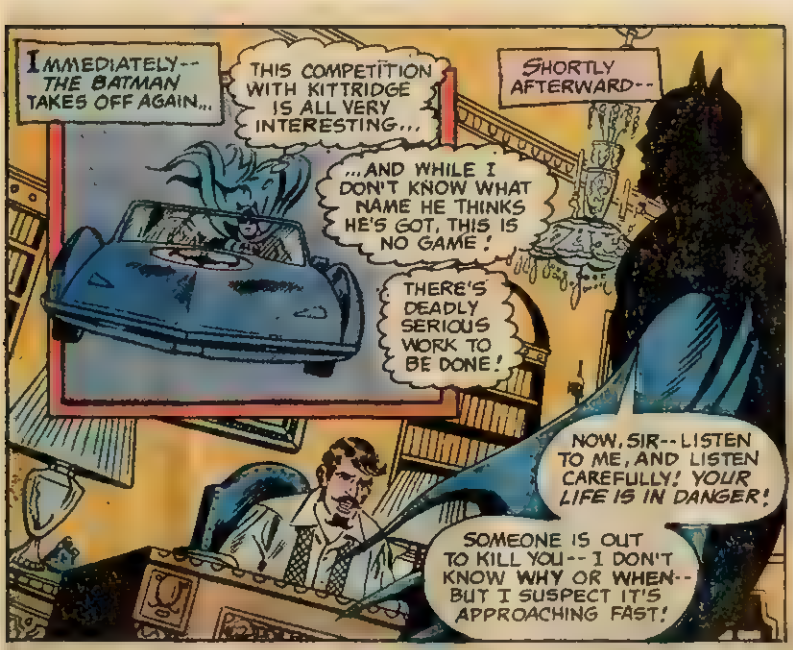
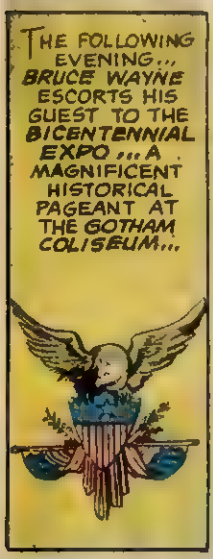
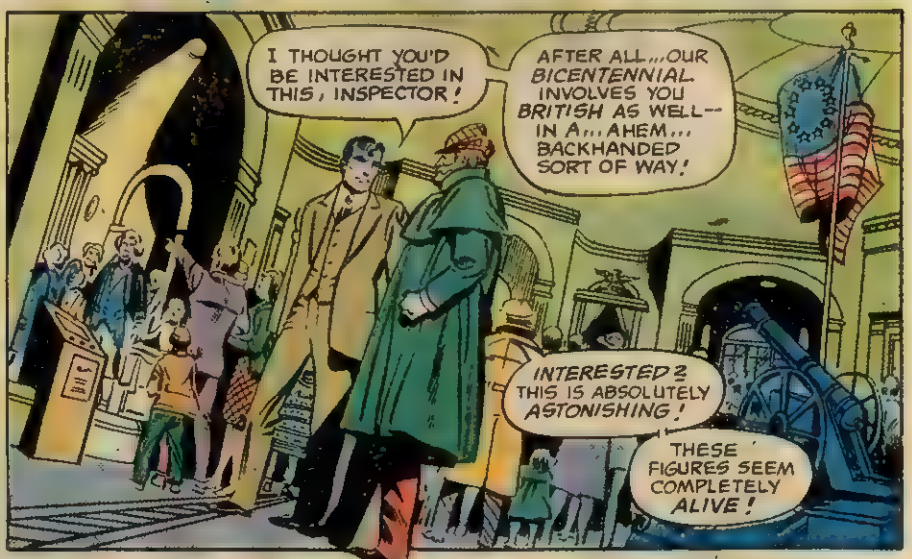
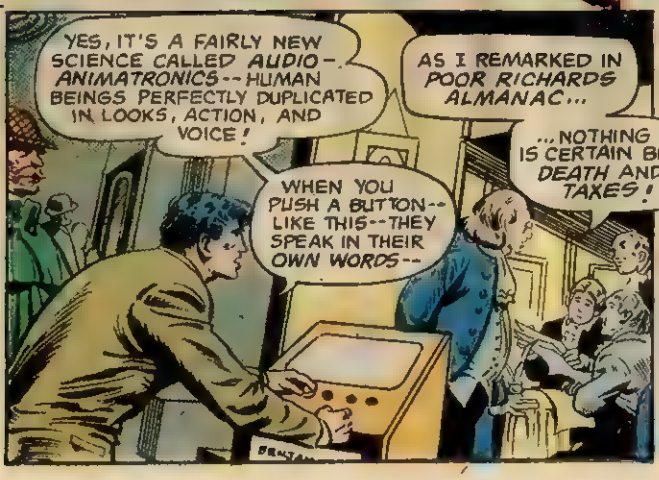

THERE HE IS... IN THAT BOAT! C'MON--!
HE'S GOING UNDER THE FOOTBRIDGE--TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE LAKE!
BUT--MOMENTS LATER...
¦EH?¦ NO SIGN OF HIM--AND NO WAY ALONG HERE HE COULD HAVE ROWED TO SHORE!
VANISHED! --LIKE A U-BOAT!
HARDLY THAT, INSPECTOR!
THOSE HANDS OF HIS COULD EASILY HAVE SMASHED THROUGH THE BOTTOM OF HIS BOAT... IN THE BRIEF TIME IT TOOK US TO TURN THE BEND--
--WHICH WOULD HAVE BROUGHT HIM ABOUT HERE!
LET'S TAKE A LOOK!
I AGREE WITH YOU ABOUT THE MESSAGE--IN FACT, I MAY HAVE THE NEXT PART OF IT--THE BEGINNING OF A NAME!
SO THERE'S MORE TO COME--AND HE'S EXTREMELY SUBTLE IN HIS DEMENTIA!
THAT HE IS!
RIGHT ON THE BEAM, BATMAN! HE SWAM TO SHORE--
--UNDERWATER!
THAT'S THE LAST WE'LL SEE OF HIM TONIGHT! HE'S GOT HIS MESSAGE ACROSS--
--AND THE MESSAGE IS MURDER!
PRESENTLY--
I UNDERSTAND BRUCE WAYNE IS TAKING YOU TO THE BICENTENNIAL EXPO EARLY TOMORROW EVENING--SO I'LL PICK YOU UP HERE AFTERWARDS...
YES, BUT CAN'T WE DISCUSS MY IDEA ABOUT--
SORRY, INSPECTOR--TOMORROW NIGHT!
WAYNE PL

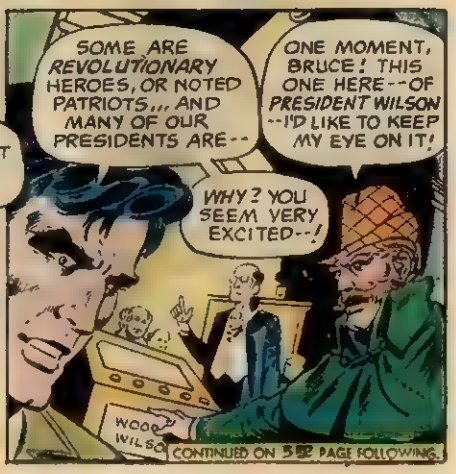

IMMEDIATELY-- THE BATMAN TAKES OFF AGAIN...
THIS COMPETITION WITH KITTRIDGE IS ALL VERY INTERESTING...
SHORTLY AFTERWARD--
...AND WHILE I DON'T KNOW WHAT NAME HE THINKS HE'S GOT, THIS IS NO GAME!
THERE'S DEADLY SERIOUS WORK TO BE DONE!
NOW, SIR--LISTEN TO ME, AND LISTEN CAREFULLY! YOUR LIFE IS IN DANGER!
SOMEONE IS OUT TO KILL YOU--I DON'T KNOW WHY OR WHEN--BUT I SUSPECT IT'S APPROACHING FAST!

HOPEFULLY, I'LL GET HIM BEFORE HE GETS TO YOU!
BUT IF NOT, THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE YOU REQUIRES YOUR COMPLETE COOPERATION!
YES, YES, OF COURSE, BATMAN!


THE FOLLOWING EVENING... BRUCE WAYNE ESCORTS HIS GUEST TO THE BICENTENNIAL EXPO ... A MAGNIFICENT HISTORICAL PAGEANT AT THE GOTHAM COLISEUM...


I THOUGHT YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN THIS, INSPECTOR!
AFTER ALL...OUR BICENTENNIAL INVOLVES YOU BRITISH AS WELL--IN A...AHEM... BACKHANDED SORT OF WAY!
INTERESTED? THIS IS ABSOLUTELY ASTONISHING!
THESE FIGURES SEEM COMPLETELY ALIVE!


YES, IT'S A FAIRLY NEW SCIENCE CALLED AUDIO-ANIMATRONICS--HUMAN BEINGS PERFECTLY DUPLICATED IN LOOKS, ACTION, AND VOICE!
AS I REMARKED IN POOR RICHARDS ALMANAC...
...NOTHING IS CERTAIN BUT DEATH AND TAXES!
WHEN YOU PUSH A BUTTON--LIKE THIS--THEY SPEAK IN THEIR OWN WORDS--


SOME ARE REVOLUTIONARY HEROES, OR NOTED PATRIOTS... AND MANY OF OUR PRESIDENTS ARE--
ONE MOMENT, BRUCE! THIS ONE HERE--OF PRESIDENT WILSON--I'D LIKE TO KEEP MY EYE ON IT!
WHY? YOU SEEM VERY EXCITED--!
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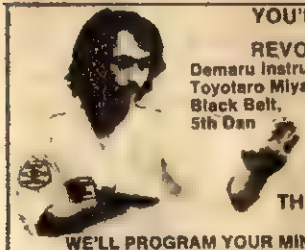

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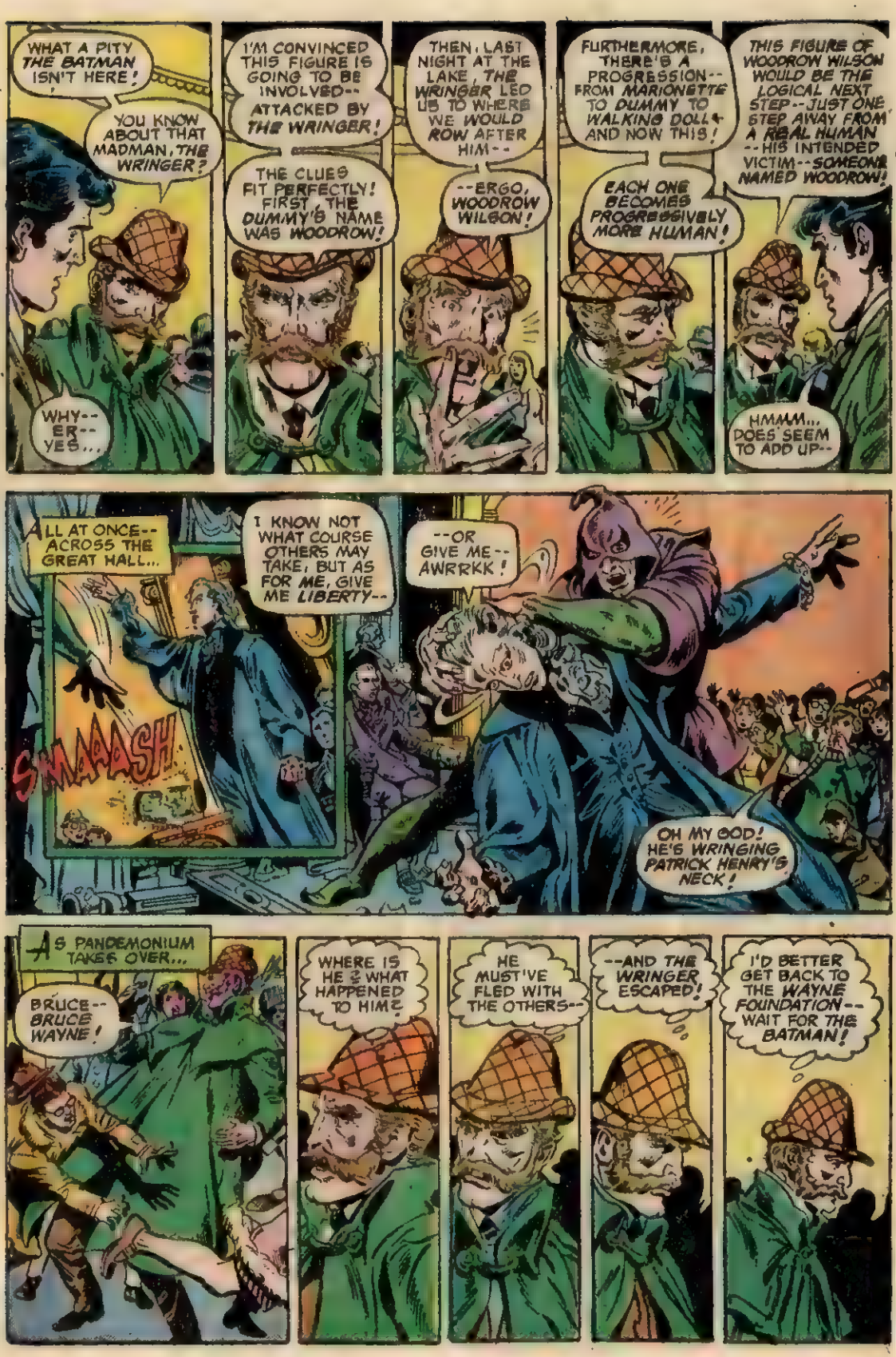
WHAT A PITY THE BATMAN ISN'T HERE!
YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT MADMAN, THE WRINGER?
WHY-- ER-- YES...
I'M CONVINCED THIS FIGURE IS GOING TO BE INVOLVED-- ATTACKED BY THE WRINGER!
THE CLUES FIT PERFECTLY! FIRST, THE DUMMY'S NAME WAS WOODROW!
THEN, LAST NIGHT AT THE LAKE, THE WRINGER LED US TO WHERE WE WOULD ROW AFTER HIM--
--ERGO, WOODROW WILSON!
FURTHERMORE, THERE'S A PROGRESSION-- FROM MARIONETTE TO DUMMY TO WALKING DOLL-- AND NOW THIS!
EACH ONE BECOMES PROGRESSIVELY MORE HUMAN!
THIS FIGURE OF WOODROW WILSON WOULD BE THE LOGICAL NEXT STEP--JUST ONE STEP AWAY FROM A REAL HUMAN --HIS INTENDED VICTIM--SOMEONE NAMED WOODROW!
HMMM... DOES SEEM TO ADD UP--
ALL AT ONCE-- ACROSS THE GREAT HALL...
I KNOW NOT WHAT COURSE OTHERS MAY TAKE, BUT AS FOR ME, GIVE ME LIBERTY--
--OR GIVE ME-- AWRRKK!
SMAAASH
OH MY GOD! HE'S WRINGING PATRICK HENRY'S NECK!
AS PANDEMONIUM TAKES OVER...
BRUCE-- BRUCE WAYNE!
WHERE IS HE? WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
HE MUST'VE FLED WITH THE OTHERS--
--AND THE WRINGER ESCAPED!
I'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE WAYNE FOUNDATION-- WAIT FOR THE BATMAN!

HALF A MILE EAST--TEN MINUTES LATER...
...THE DRAMA OF THE WRINGER IS REACHING ITS CLIMAX!
WH-WHO ARE YOU?
H-HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?
WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT?
MY LIFE'S SAVINGS--WIPED OUT!
INVESTED IN YOUR STOCK BROKERAGE--AND YOU TOOK EVERY CENT--WRUNG ME DRY--
--JUST AS I'M GOING TO WRING YOU--
--LIKE THIS!
NO...NO!
THE MARKET FELL! IT'S ALWAYS A GAMBLE! THERE WAS NOTHING DISHONEST!
LISTEN TO REASON! --STOP!
I TRIED TO STOP--TRIED TO TELL THE BATMAN... TO PLEAD FOR HELP TO STOP ME--
--BUT IT'S TOO LATE...TOO LATE! I CAN'T HELP MYSELF!
HA! DO YOU THINK A CLOSET--
--CAN SAVE YOU?
CHAK

DEPENDS ON WHO IS IN IT, WRINGER!
WHAM
CRASH
FOR A MAN WHO LIKES TO USE HIS HANDS--
--YOU SURE USE LOTS OF OTHER THINGS!
KLANK
YOU CAN PITCH--
--BUT CAN YOU CATCH?
BOPP

WOMP
I'M NOT SURE EVEN MY BATCUFFS COULD HOLD YOU--EXCEPT THIS WAY!
YOU'LL HAVE TO WRING YOUR OWN LEGS OFF TO GET LOOSE AGAIN!
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW, MR. WALKER... YOU CAN COME OUT!
SORRY ABOUT THE MESS--
MESS? THAT'S WHAT I'D BE BY NOW-- IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOU, BATMAN!
SOON AFTER, INSPECTOR KITTRIDGE ARRIVES AT POLICE HQ IN RESPONSE TO THE COMMISSIONER'S URGENT SUMMONS...
BATMAN, YOU NOBBLED HIM!-- EXTRAORDINARY!
BUT HOW--?
I WAS THERE AT THE EXPO, INSPECTOR-- IN DISGUISE--
--WHEN THE WRINGER SMASHED THAT HOURGLASS AND CUT OFF THE PATRICK HENRY ANIMATRON JUST BEFORE THE WORD DEATH!
I TOOK IT TO MEAN THAT TIME HAD RUN OUT--AND DEATH WAS NEXT--
--BUT I'D ALREADY DECODED WHERE HE WAS GOING--
WHEN? HOW?
LAST NIGHT-- FROM THE DUMMY AND THE DOLL!
CONCLUDED ON 3rd PAGE FOLLOWING

YOU ASKED FOR THEM!

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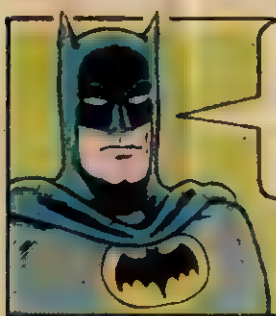

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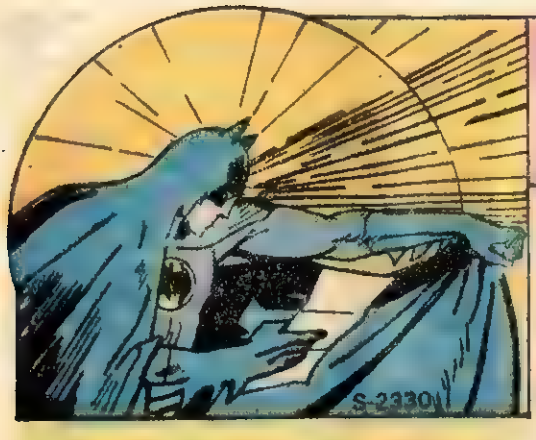
THE DUMMY WAS MADE OF DOUGLAS FIR, SO I THEORIZED THE FIRST NAME MIGHT WELL BE DOUGLAS!
THE SECOND NAME AND THE ADDRESS CAME FROM THE DOLL--A WALKER ON A PARK AVENUE!
I WENT TO DOUGLAS WALKER AND MADE MY ARRANGEMENTS!
I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND IT!
THIS WAS A MAN DIVIDED, COMMISSIONER! HE WANTED TO KILL--BUT HE ALSO WANTED TO BE STOPPED!
CAUGHT BETWEEN WARRING IMPULSES--UNABLE TO TELL ME IN PERSON--HE LED ME ON, CLUE BY CLUE, HOPING I'D CATCH HIM IN TIME!
BUT HOW DID HE ALWAYS KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU?
SIMPLE ENOUGH... I FOUND A BUG PLANTED IN BRUCE WAYNE'S PENTHOUSE!
THE WRINGER HEARD YOU AND ALFRED DISCUSSING OUR PLANS FOR EACH NIGHT!
EXTRA-ORDINARY!
YES...THE THIN LINE BETWEEN INSANITY AND GENIUS!
BUT WHAT REALLY BOGGLES THE MIND IS REALIZING THAT HIS FANTASTICALLY DETAILED PLANS MUST HAVE HAD ALTERNATIVES ALL ALONG THE WAY...
...ALTERNATIVES WE'LL NEVER KNOW ABOUT!
WELL, INSPECTOR--WHAT IDEAS DID YOU HAVE?
NONE WORTH REPEATING!
FRANKLY, I DON'T KNOW HOW I'M GOING TO RECOVER FROM THIS! ABSOLUTELY MASTERFUL! INTUITION--THE INDISPENSABLE INGREDIENT!
Epilogue
THE $100 IS YOURS, BRUCE! I NEVER HAD A CHANCE THIS TIME--
--BUT I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER CHANCE--AND ANOTHER WAGER!
YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME!
POOR CLIVE! HE'S GOING TO BE A LOT POORER!
END
NEXT ISSUE ON SALE DURING THE THIRD WEEK IN JUNE



LETTERS to the BATMAN

c/o NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.,
75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019.

Dear Editor:

"Gotham City Treasure Hunt" (**BATMAN #274**) is an **Underworld Olympics** masterpiece, both storywise and artwise!

Amba Kadiri gave some suspenseful action to the tale and Ernie Chua's stylish handling of the Caped Crusader's sliced cape was wonderful.

David V. Reed gets better with every passing month. Plots are good and there is a real element of mystery that is lacking in **Batman** tales by other scripters. One thing that usually spoils the fight scenes, however, is the dialogue **Batman** has been spouting. A perfect example—"Uncle **Batman** wants YOU!" is found in this story. The line is, to be frank, kinda stupid! Luckily, though, it is more than made up for by the accompanying art.

Chua gave an animated effect to pages 5 and 7 using the multipanel-for-one-scene effect he seems fond of. He's not the only one, though. I like it too!

PHIL GLADSTONE, Belgrade Lakes, Me.

(While most readers agree that Dave's scripts get better every issue, our next correspondent has other ideas!—BR)

• • • • •

Dear Julie and Bob,

Quick! Is there another **Batman** writer in the house? Gotham City is suffering from a bad plague of the Stupids!

You want some examples? Okay—Amba Kadiri, the so-called scourge of Gotham, is willing to be captured by the police so that her partners in crime can steal a title off a movie marquee. **Batman**, the avenger of the night, doesn't mind that the library thieves are shooting at him, but he goes into a rage when he realizes that some books may burn. And all those campy crooks are in a crime competition undergoing all that risk for no particular reason.

I'm getting pretty sick of these **Underworld Olympics.** I don't know why any crook would want to participate. What especially struck me was **Batman's** ignorance of geography. He figures out there's an olympics going on, and deduces that with South America, Europe, Africa and Asia out of the way, only North America is left. Please don't tell **Batsy** that there are crooks in Australia too or we might have an issue in which he fights a kangaroo boxer!

ADAM CASTRO, New Rochelle, N.Y.

(We probably shouldn't tell you this, but next year's Olympics will be held in New Rochelle—and you're going to be the first victim!—BR)

• • • • •

Dear Editor:

I **object!** In the third installment of the **Underworld Olympics,** you have one of the best **Batman** stories ever . . . a near-classic, seventeen pages of action that you could make an Oscar-winning movie out of! My favorite scene was the fight with Amba Kadiri, with some of Ernie Chua's best art yet!

Yet despite this monument of literature, I still **object!** Why? Because this 17-page classic lasted 18 pages—the last one being plain stupid. The corny crusader shows off his knowledge of old movies and says, "Commissioner, it's as if we're in some kind of Underworld Olympics!" What a brain!

CHRIS ARNOTT, Winchester, Mass.

(If you think Batman's lines were corny, wait'll you see some of Robin's puns when he joins his Masked Mentor in next issue's "Riddler on a Rampage!"—BR)

• • • • •

Dear Editor:

The Ernie Chua cover for **BATMAN #274** was a searing eyepopper, the kind that makes a reader snatch up a copy and buy it right away. Slightly reminiscent of the "**Batman** vs. outlandish costumed villain" era, the cover was actually much more. The solid black background, drawing focus immediately to **Batman,** costume ripped and chest crimson with blood, was a definite plus. Cover illos should always be simple—the least detail with the most impact. Happily this was the case for what is definitely the best **BATMAN** cover in months.

"Gotham City Treasure Hunt" has finally set our hero on the trail of the Olympics contenders. At least he has an inkling of where they'll strike next and who will do the striking. There is little to be said about the actual plot of the story, however, since it was basically the same as the previous two installments. It contained all the finest elements—**Batman** tracking, **Batman** battling and **Batman** solving! It was nice to see a female crook finally participating in the Olympics—and such a good one, too. Amba (Steel Claw) Kadiri would make a fine addition to **Batman's** Rogues' Gallery.

My lone objection was the icy and ill-tempered characterization of Bruce Wayne. It just isn't him—**The Batman** was always very good at keeping his crimefighting from interfering with his good humor. Bruce is a nice guy and snapping at Alfred was totally out of character.

SCOTT GIBSON, Evergreen, Colo.

(Considering the circumstances of Bruce's snapping—two guards having been killed while Batman was following a red herring trail—don't you think his mood was justified?—Bob Rozakis)

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VOLUME 76 ISSUE 2 | WEEK OF MAY 10th, 1976 | BOB ROZAKIS: EDITOR

SUPERMAN MISSING!

JUSTICE LEAGUE ORGANIZES SEARCH

(JLA Satellite) — The members of the *Justice League of America* have announced plans to search for *Superman*, who has been missing since the group's battle with *Sonar* and the *Queen Bee*. Also joining in the search is *Supergirl*, the Man of Steel's cousin.

It has been reported, however, that the missing superhero has been located by Gerry Conway, Dick Dillin and Frank McLaughlin in *JLA #133!* Under the story title "Missing—One Man of Steel," they reveal that *Superman* has been transported to the planet Sirkus. Unaware that his fellow *JLAers* are unable to locate him, the Son of Krypton has been duped into working with actors portraying *Flash*, *Green Lantern*, *Wonder Woman* and *Aquaman* to battle one of the *Justice League's* oldest foes. Said villain is *Despero*, the evil three-eyed dictator from another dimension.

Can the Sirkian duplicates do as well as their *JLA* counterparts? Will *Superman* realize what's going on? Do the real *JLAers* have any hopes of finding him? You'll find the answers and more in *JLA #133*, on sale the week of May 17th.

GODS AT WAR! HERCULES BATTLES ARES TO THE DEATH

(Europe) — It's a battle of the gods that can only end in death for either Ares, the god of war, or our hero, *Hercules!* On an Earth already ravaged by World War III, how much more damage can be done, you ask? You'll find out when Gerry Conway, Jose Luis Garcia Lopez and Wally Wood reveal how "Even a God May Die" in *HERCULES UNBOUND #6*, on sale the week of May 17th.

DIRECT CURRENTS

ON SALE THE WEEK OF MAY 17th

DC SUPER STARS OF SPACE #6: **Our star-spanning heroes this time around include *Adam Strange* battling "The Robot Wraiths of Rann," *Captain Comet* forced to "Beware the Synthetic Men," *Tommy Tomorrow* in a "Journey to 1960" and *Space Cabby* driving "The Luxury Limousine of Space."**

KOBRA #4: **A shocker of an ending is waiting for you as the friends of the Servitor from outer space brings Jason Burr and *Kobra* together again. Martin Pasko, Pat Gabriele and Terry Austin demand you don't miss it!**

KUNG FU FIGHTER #11: **Somebody's still out to waste Ben Turner, but it's off to China for Richard Dragon and company before they can track down the assassin! "When Strike the Samauri" is by guest writer David Anthony Kraft, and artists Ric Estrada and Jack Abel.**

PLASTIC MAN UNCOVERS MONSTER IN SEWER

(New York) — On assignment for the N.B.I., *Plastic Man* has uncovered the secret of a strange creature lurking in the sewers beneath Manhattan. Created by a scientist from foods rejected by the National Food Administration, the creature—code-named Meat By-Product—emerged from a garbage truck and took up residence below ground, surviving on tons of trash floating in the sewage system.

Add to this the problem of another creature—code-named Sludge—existing on the west coast and you've got a real caper for *Plastic Man* and Woozy. It's all in "Meat By-Product and Sludge," an Elliot Maggin/Ramona Fradon/Mike Royer presentation in *PLASTIC MAN #14*, on sale the week of May 17th.

TRIVIA QUIZ #2

Villains are all the rage these days, so let's test your knowledge on some of ours. Do you know the real names of 1) *The Riddler*, 2) *Mirror Master*, 3) *Terra-Man*, 4) *The Mad Hatter*, 5) *The Joker*? Answers next week. ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S QUIZ: The *Star Spangled Kid* is Sylvester Pemberton, his partner was *Stripesy* (Pat Dugan) and they appeared together in (what else?) *STAR SPANGLED COMICS!*

WITCHING HOUR #65: **Our three bewitching hostesses present a trio of tales—"A Handy Way to Die" (by Jack Phillips and E. R. Cruz); "The Loathesome Loner" (by Carl Wessler and Ricardo Villamonte); and "Laugh? I Thought You'd Die..." (by Wessler and Redondo).**

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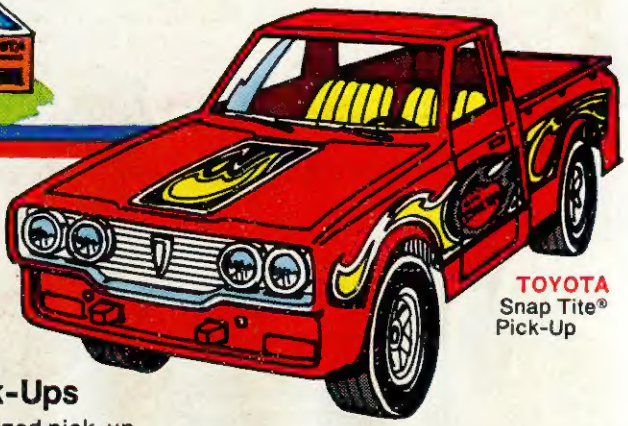

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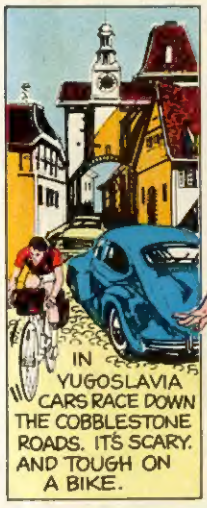

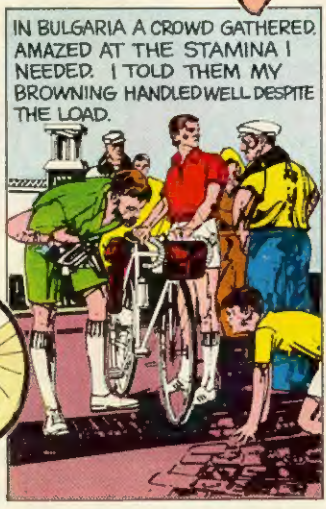

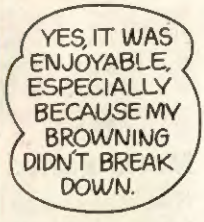

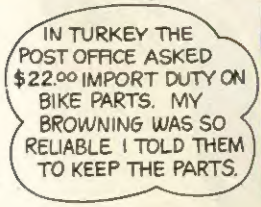

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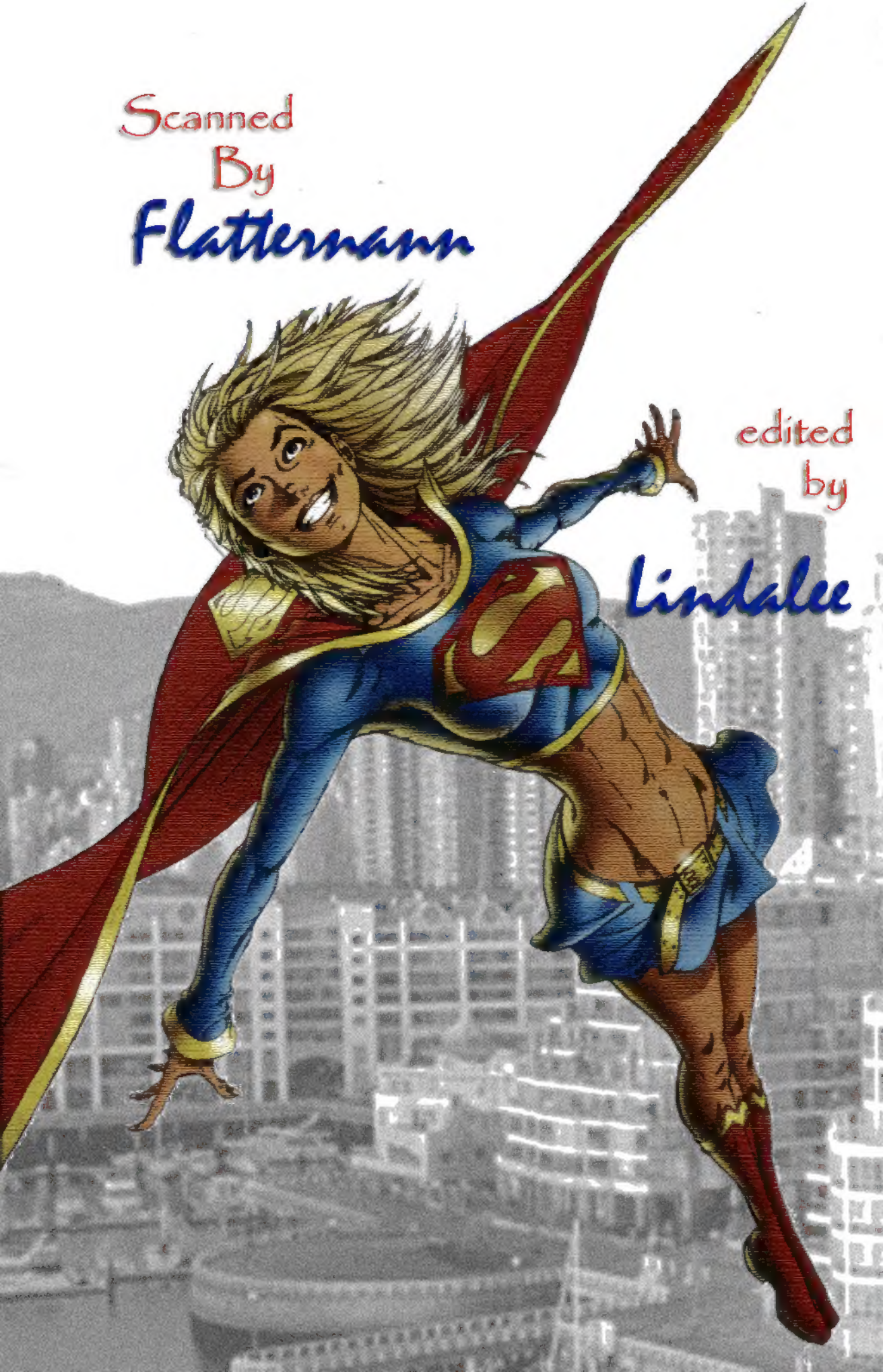

edited by lindalee